

The Canterbury Tales

Geoffrey Chaucer

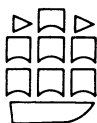


The Canterbury Tales

GEOFFREY CHAUCER

Simplified by Michael West

850 word vocabulary



LONGMAN

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Note: Words outside the vocabulary for Stage 2 are shown by a star* and are listed at the end of the book

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I THE PROLOGUE

At the Tabard Inn

Pilgrims go to a place because they want to please God. Their journey—a *pilgrimage*—is often to a place where a *saint* once lived or died.

Thomas à Becket was a saint—a very good servant of God. He was killed in Canterbury *Cathedral*, the great old church in Canterbury. Very many pilgrims went to Canterbury to visit the cathedral.

Chaucer wrote a book about six hundred years ago. It told the story of some pilgrims who went to Canterbury together. On the journey from London, they each told a story—a *tale*.

The pilgrims met at a house called the Tabard *Inn* in London. The host—the innkeeper—was a fat man. He was very happy and full of good stories which made them laugh. The pilgrims had a very good meal with a lot of good food and drink.

After the meal, the Host stood up and said, 'I am very pleased to meet you. I have never met such a happy company. We are all going to Canterbury. It is a long way, and you need something to keep you happy on the journey. I will ask you to do something. Each of you must tell a story on the way. We shall give a very good dinner to the pilgrim who tells the best story. Will you do that? Hold up your hands if you will do it.'

The pilgrims all held up their hands. They cried, 'Yes! Yes! We will do that. And we will make the Host our leader. He will tell us which story is best.'

The Host made all the pilgrims get up very early next morning. They started on their journey. When they stopped to give their horses water, the Host said, 'You remember what we said last night about telling stories.'

'Yes,' they said. 'Who will tell the first story?'

The Host said, 'I will ask the *Knight* to tell the first story.'

Knights were gentlemen who fought for the king. This knight had just come back



❖ Prima. pars. ❖

Here begynneth the Segge of Thebes ful
lamentably tolde by Iohn Lidgate Yonke of
Bury annuynge it to ye callys of Cantuury

his quod I. sith of youre Entesye
I enterde am. in to youre Compaignie
And admytted. A tale for to tele
By hym that hath power to compele
I mene oure hofte governere and gyde

Of youre ertheone. rydunge here by side
Thogh my wit. bareyne be and dulle
I wolle reherce. A story wonderfulle
Toucheinge the segge. and destruction
Of worthy Thebes. the myghty royale Ton
Silt and bygonne. of olde anagrite
Upon the tyme. of worthy Josue
By diligence. of kynge Amphion
Cheeff cause first. of this foundaçon

de from
Cantuury

4

from the war. He was going to Canterbury to give thanks to God because he had come back safe and unhurt.



2 THE KNIGHT'S TALE

Palamon and Arcite

Duke Theseus once ruled over Athens. He was a great soldier. He had conquered Scythia in a war, and he had married its Queen Hippolyta. When she came to live with him in Athens, she brought her younger sister, Emily, with her. As they were riding back to Athens a soldier brought bad news.

‘Creon has begun a war against you, Duke

Theseus. He has conquered Thebes.'

Theseus sent some of his knights to Athens with Hippolyta and Emily. Then he went to Thebes with his other knights. He fought Creon and killed him.

There were two young knights among the many men who fought for Creon. Their names were Palamon and Arcite. They were wounded, but they were not dead. They were lying side by side. They had rich clothes; so they were taken to Duke Theseus.

The Duke said, 'Your families will pay a lot of gold if I set you free. But I will not set you free. You fought for Creon, so you shall never be free again.' He sent them to Athens to be shut up as *prisoners* in a high *tower*.

Duke Theseus rode home and lived happily in Athens with his beautiful wife, Hippolyta, and her younger sister, Emily.

Palamon and Arcite lived sadly in the high tower. One morning Palamon got up very early and looked out of the window into the Duke's garden. He saw a lady. She was very beautiful. She was walking in the garden and she was putting flowers in her hair. This beautiful lady was Emily.

When Palamon saw her he gave a loud cry. Arcite heard him, and said, 'Dear Palamon, what is the matter? Your face is white. Why did you cry out? Think! We are prisoners and we will always be prisoners. We must learn to bear this sad life quietly.'

Palamon said, 'I did not cry out because we are prisoners. I cried out because I have just seen the most beautiful lady in the world. I pray to the gods to make me free. Then I can be with her. But, if I cannot be free, I want to die.'

Arcite looked out of the window and saw Emily. He cried, 'If she will not love me, I do not want to live any more.'

This was too much for Palamon. He said, 'We have been brothers in our sad life here, shut up away from the world. Now you want to steal my lady. You shall not do that! I loved her first and I shall love her for ever. You must help me to win her.'

Arcite said, 'You saw her first, but I love her as much as you do.' How can you *or* I win her when we are shut up here in this tower?'

Palamon said, 'Some day we may be free, and then let the best man win!'

For many days the old friendliness between

them was quite lost.

Duke Theseus had a friend, called Duke Perotheus. Perotheus had known Arcite for many years and liked him very much. He heard about Arcite in the tower. He said, 'I am very sorry to hear that Arcite is your prisoner. He is not like Creon. He is a good young man. Please let him be free. Please let Arcite come out into the world again.'

Duke Theseus thought, 'Perotheus is in my house. I like him and he has asked me to do this. It will please him if I do it.'

So he answered, 'Yes, Arcite shall come out of the tower. He shall be free. But he must go away from Athens, and he must never come here again. If he ever tries to come back I will cut off his head.'

Before Arcite left *prison*, he had a last talk with Palamon. He said, 'I must leave Athens, and so I do not want to be free. You can stay here and look at my beautiful lady in the garden. It is better for you than for me.'

Palamon was just as sad. 'You will be free,' he said. 'Perhaps you will come back with an army and make war on Athens. If you win, my beautiful lady will be yours.'

Life seemed very hard to both the young men.

Arcite was in Thebes, far away from Athens, but he still loved Emily. He thought of her every day. He became very ill.

One night, the god Mercury came to him in his sleep and said, 'Go back to Athens. When you are in Athens you will be happy again.'

Arcite sprang up and cried, 'I will go back to Athens at once! If the Duke catches me, he will cut off my head. But I am not afraid of death if I can see my beautiful lady.'

He looked at his face in the glass. His illness had changed him very much.

'No one will know me now,' he said. 'I can go quite safely to Athens.'

He went back to Athens and became one of the servants in the house of the Lady Emily. He drew water; he cut wood; he was happy to do any hard work for her! He did well and at last he became her head servant. Everyone liked his quiet voice and his hard work and his goodness. They called him Philostrate.

Even Duke Theseus began to notice him. For seven years he became dearer and dearer

to Theseus.

All this time, Palamon had lived his sad life in prison. He had no hope of getting out. His great love for Emily was eating him up. But at last, one night in May, a friend of Palamon put something in the drink of the man who kept watch over him. The man fell asleep; Palamon took his key, opened the great door, and was free at last.

He ran a long way, but the night was short. When the sun came up, Palamon hid in a little wood. His plan was to walk by night and hide by day.

He thought: 'I will go back to Thebes. I will return at the head of an army. I will kill Theseus and win Emily.'

The next morning, Arcite was riding along, singing in the sweet sunshine. He got down from his horse, and he started to walk through the wood. Palamon was hiding there. Arcite sat down. He said, 'Emily is still far away from me. I have in me the blood of kings, but I am only a servant to Theseus. I am not even called by my own name. My hopeless love for Emily makes me sad; all my sadness has come from my love for Emily.'

When Palamon heard this, it was like a

knife in his heart. His face grew as white as death. He sprang up. 'Arcite!' he cried. 'Now I know all about you! You were like a brother to me; but you love my own lady. You or I must die. I have nothing to fight you with; but I am not afraid. I am Palamon: I will kill you!'

Arcite answered quietly. 'Do you not know that love is free? I tell you plainly, I shall always love this lady. But we will have a fair fight. Tomorrow, I will meet you here in this place. I will bring a sword for you and you can fight me with it. And for tonight I will bring you food and drink. Then you will be strong for the battle. If you win, the lady shall be yours.'

Palamon answered, 'I shall be happy to fight you.'

The next morning Arcite rode to the place of battle. Then the great fight began.

On the same May morning, Duke Theseus was riding in the wood with his wife, Hippolyta, and Emily. They heard the sound of fighting, and soon they saw the two knights.

Theseus rode his horse between them. He cried, 'Stop! Why are you fighting like this,

with no man to make sure that you fight fairly?’

Arcite was tired; he had lost hope. ‘Sir,’ he answered, ‘we are two unhappy men. You are our lord. Kill me first, I pray you; then kill my friend.’

Palamon said, ‘This is Arcite. By your order he must die if he is found in Athens. But he calls himself Philostrate, and he is your head servant. He has done all this for love of the Princess Emily. And I am Palamon. I have broken out of your prison. I too love Emily, and I will gladly die now, at her feet. Kill me, I pray you; but kill Arcite too.’

The Duke answered, ‘Yes! You shall both die.’

But the Queen and Emily and all the ladies in the company began to weep. They said, ‘Two such fine young men must not die!’

Then the ladies fell on their knees to pray Duke Theseus to let Palamon and Arcite live. ‘Oh, let them live!’

The Duke said, ‘This god of love is a great god. These two young men could live safely like kings in Thebes. Yet they are fighting against each other in this place. They are doing this because they both love the same

girl. But she knows nothing at all about it! Well, you shall live. But you must *promise* me that you will never come and make war on my land. You must be my friends always.'

'We promise,' they said. 'We shall always be your friends.'

The Duke then said, 'Emily cannot marry both of you. But I have a plan. Go home to Thebes. Come back here after one year. Each of you must bring a hundred knights, ready to fight for you. The one who wins that battle shall marry Emily. Do you like my plan?'

Both young men fell on their *knees* and thanked him again and again. Then they went home to Thebes. They began to get ready. Each chose a hundred followers.

Duke Theseus, too, had many things to do. He built a place outside Athens, all ready for the battle. It had stone walls, with white gates on the east and west sides. The Duke made three *temples*—a temple of Venus the *goddess* of love, a temple of Diana the goddess of outdoor life, and a temple of Mars the god of fighting. There were beautiful pictures in the temple of Venus and a garden full of flowers. In the pictures Venus had roses on

her head and a beautiful bird flying above her.

The temple of Diana was not like the house of Venus. Venus wants everyone to love and to marry. Diana does not want people to fight or to marry. She wants them to be happy all day, and to ride in the fields. She loves the early morning; so in her house there was a picture of the moon. It was just going and morning was coming.

The temple of Mars was not a happy place. It put fear into everyone who saw it. It had pictures of men fighting, and pictures of battles and burning towns. There was a picture of Mars with a fire burning in front of him.

Now the end of the year had come. Palamon and Arcite came back to Athens, each with his hundred knights. The two armies made a fine sight. Theseus himself came out to meet them.

Before the battle began, Palamon and Arcite each said, 'Theseus has built temples near the battlefield. I must visit one of them.'

Palamon thought, 'If I pray to Venus, she will help me. I will ask her for a quick

death if I do not win.' So he prayed in the temple of Venus and she seemed to move her head. He cried, 'The goddess moved her head! I am very happy. She will help me!'

Arcite went to the temple of Mars, the war-god. He said, 'Mars, help me to win the battle over Palamon!' When he had ended, the doors moved and a ringing sound came from Mars himself. The fire in front of the god burned up suddenly. Arcite heard a low voice saying, 'You will win!'

But Emily did not want to marry. She loved to be free in the woods and the fields. So she went to the temple of Diana. She said to the goddess, 'I do not want to marry either Palamon or Arcite. If I **MUST** marry, please let me marry the one who loves me most.'

Diana would not listen to her prayer. The fire which burnt in front of Diana went out. Emily began to cry. Then the goddess herself stood before her. 'Do not weep,' she said. 'The gods have said that you must marry one of these two men. Both have been very unhappy for you. But I may not tell you which of them will marry you.'

The gods Mars and Venus quarrelled. Each had said that one of the two men would

win; but both of them could not win.

Now you shall hear how Mars and Venus each kept their promise.

Palamon and Arcite had come to Athens on a Sunday. All the people there ate and drank and sang and danced on Monday. Early on Tuesday everyone went to see the great fight.

It was a very fine sight. There were beautiful horses and brave men everywhere. There were lords and knights in fine clothes and ladies in beautiful dresses. Duke Theseus sat and watched it all.

A soldier came out and cried, 'Ho! Listen to the Duke's orders!' When they were all quiet, the soldier said, 'Duke Theseus does not want any man to die. No one shall use a sword or anything with a dangerous point. Anyone who is hurt shall be taken prisoner, but he must not die. If the leader of either side is taken, then the battle will end. Now let the battle begin!'

There was warlike music. The Queen and all the lords and ladies, and Emily, rode out to watch.

Arcite came into the battlefield by the

western gate, near the temple of the god Mars; his colours were red. Palamon came by the eastern gate, near the temple of the goddess Venus; his colours were white.

It is hard to find words to tell about the great fight which followed. Horses fell and rose, and men fell.

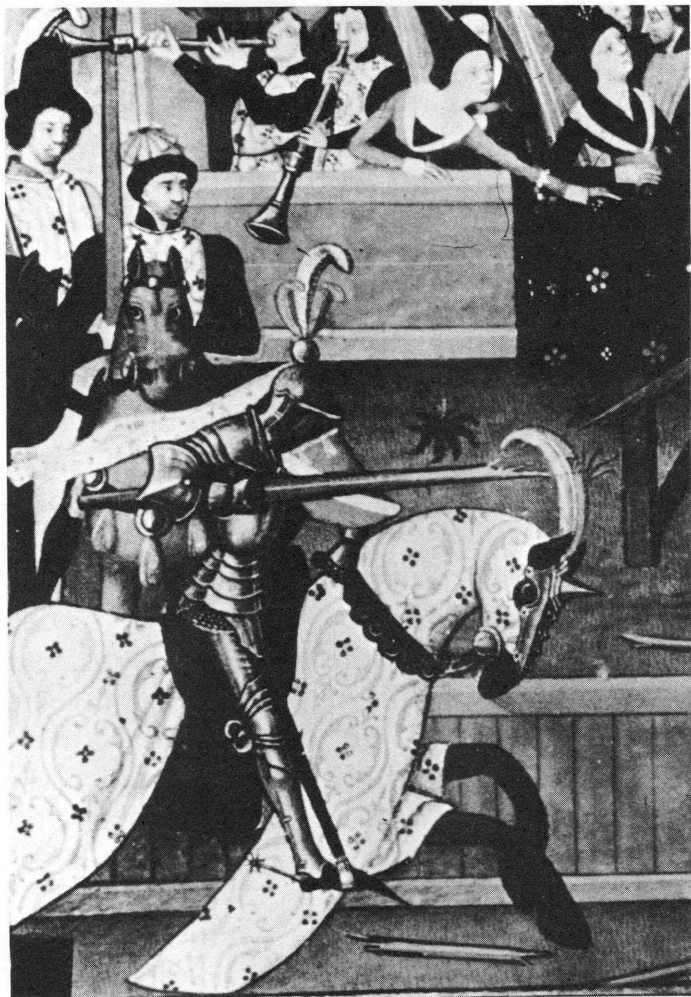
From time to time servants brought food and drink to the fighters. The battle went on all day. Suddenly Palamon was taken prisoner. That was the end of the fight.

Duke Theseus said, 'Arcite shall have Emily. He has won her in this long day's battle!'

The people cried out, 'Arcite! Arcite! Arcite is the winner!'

Before the battle, the goddess Venus had told Palamon, 'I will help you.' So now she was unhappy. She went to her father, Saturn. Saturn listened to her. Then he said, 'My dear daughter, it will be all right. Wait and see.'

There was loud music as Arcite rode down the battlefield towards Emily. He looked up at her and she looked down at him. She thought, 'He is a brave and beautiful young



Jousting

man! I believe I could love him and marry him!’ Suddenly, something made his horse afraid. It sprang into the air and then it fell. Arcite was thrown to the ground. He lay still; his face was covered with blood. They carried him gently to Theseus’ house and laid him on a bed.

The doctors came. At first they thought ‘Arcite will not die.’ But the pain of Arcite’s wound became worse and worse. Then they said, ‘The wounds are too deep. We cannot help him. He will die.’

They told Arcite that he was going to die. Then he sent for Palamon and Emily. He said to Emily, ‘I have loved you so much. I have borne so much for you. Now I must lay down my life for you.’

Then he turned to Palamon and said, ‘I have had much unhappiness because of you; but now death ends all this. Perhaps it is the best way.’ Then he turned to Emily and said, ‘Emily, if ever you wish to be a wife, think of Palamon. Emily and Palamon! It will make me happy in the other world.’

He closed his eyes. Death was near. His eyes became dark, but at the very end he looked up at Emily and said her name.

All the people of the city wept for Arcite for many days.

Time makes most things better. Months went by.

The people of Athens had often fought with the people of Thebes; but now they wanted to be friends. So Duke Theseus sent for Palamon.

Palamon came. He was wearing black clothes for his lost friend, Arcite. Then the Duke said, 'Put an end to your unhappiness. You will not forget Arcite; but the world has still much happiness waiting for you. Do you not remember that Arcite said to Emily, "If ever you wish to be a wife, think of Palamon." Does that not make you happy, even a little?'

He called for Emily. The Duke took her hand. 'Sister,' he said, 'I will tell you the wish of all my people. If you love Palamon and marry him, then we in Athens will be friendly with the people of Thebes. We will be close in blood and in love. Take good Palamon and marry him. He has loved you for a long time.'

He said to Palamon, 'Take this lady by the hand. She will be your own dear wife.'

So Palamon and Emily were married and lived happily ever after. The people of Athens and of Thebes were friends again.

All the pilgrims said, 'That was a beautiful story.'

'Yes,' said the Host. 'We have made a good beginning.'

Some pilgrims told other stories. Then the Host turned to the *Clerk* of Oxford. He said, 'You have not said a word since we started. Perhaps you have been thinking about your books. Now think about us; and think of a good story to tell us.'

The Clerk of Oxford was learning to be a *priest*. He loved books, and he also loved to teach people about the things which he read. He was very poor; his clothes were old and had many holes in them because he had no money. He and his horse never had enough food.



3 THE CLERK'S TALE

Patient Griselda

A *patient* person bears sadness and pain.
He does not say how unhappy he is.

The Clerk said, 'My story is about a patient wife.'

Once, in a beautiful part of Italy, there lived a great lord, a marquis. His name was Walter. He was good to look at, and he was kind to poor people. He was young and

strong, but he had no wife. This made his people very sad.

At last, they came together in a company to him, and they asked him to listen to them. A wise old man spoke for them all.

‘O great marquis, we come to you because you are good. You will not be angry with us if we tell you what is in our hearts. Take a wife, we pray you. Then we shall be happy. It is sweet and right for you to marry. You will have someone who will love you and care for you. And you will see your children near you. And we shall know that our country will not pass, at your death, into the hands of someone far away.’

Then the wise old man said, ‘If you wish, we will find a wife for you. She shall be both beautiful and rich!’

Walter laughed at this, but his heart was touched. He answered, ‘You know very well, my dear people, how much I like to be free. I do not want a wife; but perhaps, as you say, I should marry for the good of our country. So—yes; I will get married very soon. But I will find my wife for myself! And I ask you to treat my wife like a king’s daughter. You must do this for me. I am doing a lot for

you.'

They said, 'Yes, we will do that. We will treat her like a king's daughter.'

So they went to their homes and waited for the day of the marriage. They were all very happy.

A very poor man lived not far from the great house of the Marquis. His name was Janicula. All the people who lived near him were poor too. They lived in small huts and worked very hard in their little fields.

Janicula had a daughter. Her name was Griselda. She was beautiful, good and kind. She loved her old father and looked after him well. Walter had often seen her when she was doing her daily work. She looked after her father's few animals, and she was often outside the house in the wind and rain. She did not know that anyone ever watched her at work. But to Walter she was the most beautiful girl in the world.

'I could love her very much,' he thought. 'I have never seen any rich lady so beautiful and so good.'

The day came for the marriage. But the people did not know about Griselda. The

Marquis had not told anyone about her.

The great house was very full. Many people had come from far and near to stay in it. The Marquis had bought beautiful dresses and jewels. All was ready.

‘Follow me,’ said the Marquis to all the lords and ladies. He led the way out of his great house towards the little huts where some of his people lived.

The lords and ladies asked each other, ‘What is he going to do?’ But they followed him.

That morning, Griselda finished all her work early so as to see the wife of the Marquis. She thought, ‘If I stand with the other girls, I may see the rich and beautiful lady who is going to marry the Marquis. First I will put my father to sit in the sun.’ She went to the door of their little house. She opened it. The Marquis stood outside. In his beautiful clothes he looked like a king.

‘Griselda,’ he said, ‘where is your father?’ The old man came out, and Walter took him by the hand.

‘Janicula,’ he said, ‘I must tell you what is in my heart. Please let your daughter be my

wife, if she will marry me.'

The old man was very surprised. He could not speak at first. Then he answered, 'Yes—I must say yes if Griselda says yes.'

'May I speak to her and to you, here in your house?' said the Marquis quietly. 'I will ask her if she will be my wife. She must promise to do always what I ask.'

The great company waited outside.

The Marquis spoke gently to Griselda. 'Griselda,' he said, 'your father says that we may marry. Please take me for your husband. But I must first ask you this. Will you promise always to do what I tell you to do?'

'My Lord,' she said, 'I am only a poor girl. You have asked me to be your wife. If you will let me look after my father in my new life, yes, I will marry you; and I will always do everything that you tell me to do.'

'That is enough, my dear Griselda,' said Walter. He took her hand and led her out to all the waiting people. 'Here is my wife,' he said.

Some ladies came forward. They came into the little house and helped Griselda to wash. They had brought beautiful clothes for her, and Griselda put them on. They put a crown

on her head.

When she came out of her hut, the people could not believe their eyes. They had never seen anyone so beautiful. The Marquis was very happy. They were married that day, and there was music and dancing all night.

For a long time the Marquis's country was happy. All the people loved Griselda, the daughter of Janicula. She helped the poor because she loved them. Everyone said, 'The Marquis did a wise and good thing when he married Griselda.'

A little girl was born to Walter and Griselda. The people said, 'One day she will be as beautiful as her mother.'

Walter thought, 'Griselda has a child. Will she be the same now? If I ask her to do something very hard, perhaps she will not do it.'

Then Walter did something very bad. It is hard to believe it. Until now Griselda had done everything that he wished; and he knew that she loved him very much. But he went on with his bad plan.

He came to her one day with a hard look on his face.

'Griselda,' he said, 'when I married a poor

man's daughter my people did not like it. Now you have a child and it is even worse for them. I shall send a man to take the child away from you. You must let him do this. Remember your words on your marriage day!

Griselda did not show her sadness. At first she said nothing. Then, at last, she said, 'Both I and my child are yours. You can do anything with us.'

The Marquis was glad when she said this. He sent a man to Griselda. The man said, 'My Lord says that I must take away this child.' Then he caught up the little sleeping child in his great arms.

Griselda said, 'Please let me kiss her before she goes from me.' She took her child, and she said quietly, 'Good-bye, my daughter. I shall never see you again. May the good God take care of you.'

As the man took her daughter away, she said, 'Please put her little body in the ground. It will be safe there from beasts and birds which may try to hurt it.'

He brought the child to Walter. Walter said, 'Take her to my sister in Bologna. Tell her to look after her well. Do not tell her that

it is my child.'

Walter watched Griselda. She seemed to love him in the same way. But she was very quiet and her face was often sad.

Then a little boy was born. Walter was glad, and his people were glad. They said, 'This child is our prince. One day we shall be his people.'

But after two happy years the same bad thought came to Walter. Walter was like some other people. He wanted to be sure about his loving and patient wife.

This time, he said the same as before, but he added, 'My people do not want a grandson of Janicula for their prince. So, again, I order you to give your child to my man.'

'My Lord,' she answered, 'I have always said that I will do everything that you tell me to do. Do what you wish with our son.' Then she added, 'I love you. If you will be happier without me, I will die to please you. Let me only keep your love.'

Nothing changed the Marquis's heart. He sent the same man to take away her little boy. Again, she asked only to kiss her son before he left her for ever. And she said, 'Put his

little body in the ground. Then no beast or bird can hurt it.' Walter sent the little boy to his sister.

Again, Walter watched his wife, and again her patience and her love for him never changed. But the people were angry with the Marquis. All over the country they said ugly things.

One said, 'He has killed his two children! He did not want Lady Griselda to love the children. She must love only the Marquis.'

Another said, 'And yet she never changes in her love for him, and she still cares for all of us when we are poor or ill!'

Now Walter did one last bad thing. He sent letters to Rome and got back some papers. These papers looked like real letters from the Pope; but they were not real letters. They only looked like real ones.

These papers told him, for the good of his people, to send his wife away. They told him to take a wife from some great and rich family.

The simple people were sad. They loved Griselda very much. But because they were simple, they believed Walter. They thought

that the letters from Rome were real. 'The Marquis must send Griselda away, and he must marry again,' they said sadly.

When Griselda heard about it, she thought, 'This is the worst thing of all. I love my husband above everything. How shall I ever live away from him?'

No one knew about it, but the Marquis had sent a letter to his sister at Bologna. 'Let your husband bring the two children to me. Tell no one who sent them to you. You must say, "This little girl will be the wife of the Marquis."''

His sister's husband set out from Bologna with the two children, as the Marquis asked. The little boy and girl were very beautiful. They were dressed in rich clothes and jewels, and they rode on fine horses.

But now the hardest time of all came for poor Griselda. One day, in a room full of people, the Marquis said, 'Well, Griselda, it wasn't a bad thing for me when I married you—you have been quite a good wife to me! It certainly wasn't a bad thing for you or for your old father! But now I must change my way of life. My people want me to send you away and to take another wife—a girl from a

good family. The Pope has ordered me to do this. Be ready; my new young wife is now on her way here.'

Griselda's answer moved the hearts of all who heard her. But she did not move the hard heart of her own husband.

'I am not good enough to be even your servant,' she said. 'I am certainly not good enough to be your wife. I have always known that. Thank you for the beautiful home in which I have lived for so long. I will gladly go back to my father now because you and the Pope want me to do that. I will never marry again: I shall always love you—only you. You told me that you loved me; but the old saying is very true: "As men grow old, love grows cold." I must leave everything behind me here. I shall take my old clothes to wear.'

Her goodness and love almost made Walter cry. But in a hard voice he said, 'Keep the clothes which you are wearing. Yes, you may keep those.'

Griselda took off all her jewels and her rich dress. She took even the shoes off her feet. She put on her poorest clothes. Then she

began to walk home. Many people followed her and wept. But Griselda did not weep.

Her father had never liked her marriage. The Marquis was too rich and high above them. Janicula asked 'What has happened to Griselda's two children?' He tried to find out, but Griselda never told him. He had heard about the new wife who was soon to come for the Marquis.

He saw his daughter coming and he ran out and took her in his arms. In every way he showed her how much he loved her and wanted to help her. For a time Griselda lived quietly with him. She worked in the little house and in the fields. It was like the old days.

But her husband still had not tried her enough. One day he sent for her. 'Griselda,' he said, 'I wish to give my new wife the best things. You must help me. You know my house, and you are good at looking after me. You must now work for my new wife. You look very poor in that old dress, but I will take no notice. Please start work here at once, and make everything ready for my new wife.'

Griselda was happy. 'I shall be very glad if I can help you.' And she began at once.

She put gold and silver on the big tables. She made all the beds. She washed the floors herself. She told the servants to be quick, and she herself worked fastest and best of them all.

At midday a great company came to the house of the Marquis to see his new wife. Griselda met the people and led them to their places. Then Walter showed them a beautiful young girl. He said, 'Griselda, how do you like the beauty of my young wife?'

Griselda said, 'I have never seen anyone more beautiful. I hope she and you will be happy together. But I ask this of you. Be kind to her; do not try her too hard. She was born of gentle people. She has been brought up as a lady. I was poor and I worked hard in my father's house. It will be harder for her. She cannot bear unkindness.'

At last Walter knew that Griselda still loved him. 'I have been very bad,' he said to himself. 'I have hurt Griselda so as to try her love for me. But she still loves me.'

'It is enough, my dearest Griselda!' he cried. 'I shall never hurt you again or bring sadness to you. Now I know how good you are and how patient you are, and how true you

are to me.' He took her in his arms and kissed her again and again.

He told her everything. And then he said, 'This is your daughter.' And he led the young girl up to her. 'She is our daughter. I was not really going to marry her. This is our son. I sent them to Bologna. They have been safe and well all these years.'

Griselda was very happy. She called her children to her, put her arms round them and kissed them both. Many people who were watching began to weep.

'Oh thank you!' she said to Walter. 'Thank you for saving my children for me. I can die now. I have both them and your love!'

Her ladies took Griselda to her own rooms. They took off her old clothes and put her rich clothes on her. With her crown on her head she went to take her place for ever as Walter's wife.

They lived happily for many years. They married their daughter to a very rich and very good man. The Marquis gave old Janicula a room in his house. Their son became Marquis when his father died.

'That,' said the Clerk, 'is the end of my

story. All wives should not try to be as patient as Griselda. That would not be good. But all women should be patient with God. They should bear everything patiently.'

At the end of the Clerk's story Chaucer wrote: 'Patient Griselda is now dead; so I may say openly to all husbands: Do not try the patience of your wives and hope to find them like Griselda. They will certainly not be like her!

'And I will say something to all wives: Don't be afraid of your husbands. Even if your husband is big and strong, your words will always win in a battle.'



4 *THE WIFE OF BATH'S TALE*

What do women want most?

There were only a few women among the pilgrims who were riding to Canterbury. One of them was the Wife of Bath. She was a large woman with a red face. She wore a big hat, and she rode on a very fat horse. She was rich, and she had travelled far and wide in the world. She had had five husbands, but they had all died. She liked to talk and be happy.

She, too, told a story about a young knight. He had done a very bad thing: he had broken the laws which all knights must keep. The Wife of Bath's tale was about the time of King Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table.

King Arthur heard what the young knight had done. 'That is very bad!' he said. 'He must die.'

The Queen and her ladies were sad because they liked the young knight very much. 'He is not really bad,' they said to each other.

'Please, please,' they prayed the King, 'please do not end this young man's life. He knows that he has done a bad thing; he will never make such a mistake again.'

The King said to the Queen, 'Well, do whatever you like with him. But he must pay for breaking the law.'

The Queen thought for a little time; then she said to the knight, 'You shall live, if you can tell me the answer to this question: What does a woman want most of all? I will give you a year and a day to find out the answer. If you cannot find it, you must die.'

The knight thanked her, but he rode away very sadly.

He said, 'The Queen has asked a very hard

question. How can I find the answer?’

He asked many people, ‘What does a woman want most of all?’

He got very many answers.

A man said, ‘Women like jewels and money more than anything else.’

One woman said, ‘What do women want most of all? They want to be happy. That’s what they want.’

‘What do women want most of all?’ said another woman. ‘Fine clothes, of course. That’s what they want.’

He asked some children.

A little girl said, ‘My mother is most happy when she is cooking good food for us.’

A little boy said, ‘My mother likes best to have a new baby in our family.’

‘Our mother is happiest of all when she sees our father come home at night,’ said two or three children all together.

Many of the answers seemed very good answers, but none of them seemed to be right. There was no answer that *everybody* would call right.

At last a year had passed. The knight had to go back and take the answer to the Queen.

The poor knight thought, 'What shall I say? What can I say? I have tried so hard! Must I really die?'

Just then he came to a great wood. Twenty-four beautiful ladies were dancing there on the green grass. He said, 'Here are twenty-four more people whom I can ask. I have just enough time to ask them.'

He turned his horse towards them—Where were they? They had all gone, suddenly, into the air! Only one very old, very ugly woman sat there now. When he came near, she stood up and went to him.

'Sir Knight,' she said, 'are you looking for something? Tell me what it is, and perhaps I can help you. We old people are wise; we know many things.'

He said, 'You may be just the person who can help me. I shall lose my life if I cannot find the answer to a question: What does a woman want most of all? If you can tell me, I will pay you well.'

'Give me your hand,' she answered. 'You must do the first thing which I ask you. Promise! Then I will tell you the right answer.'

The knight said, 'I promise to do the first thing that you ask me to do.'

‘Then your life is safe,’ said the old woman. ‘Not one person—not even the Queen—will say that your answer is not the true one.’

She spoke very quietly into his ear. ‘That,’ she said, ‘is the answer to your question.’

Then they went along together to meet the Queen and all the lords and ladies.

The people heard that the young knight was coming. Everyone went to tell everyone else and they ran to the meeting-place. The Queen was there, ready to hear his answer. Many men and women were afraid. ‘The young knight will die,’ they said.

‘It was a very hard question,’ they said to each other. ‘It will be bad if he cannot tell the Queen the answer.’

Everyone became quiet as they stood around. They heard the Queen say in a clear voice, ‘Now can you tell us, Sir Knight, what a woman wants most of all?’

The knight came forward. He fell on his knees in front of her. Everyone heard his answer.

‘My Lady and my Queen, the thing which every woman wants most of all is to be head of her house. She wants to make her husband

do as she wishes.'

When they heard this, all the people said that it was the right answer! 'Let him live!' they cried.

The Queen was very pleased with this answer. She said, 'You shall be free, and live!'

Suddenly, the old woman came forward. 'Be good to me too, my Lady,' she said to the Queen. 'I said to the knight, "I will tell you the answer, but you must promise to do what I ask you to do."' She turned to the knight. 'Did you not promise this?'

'Yes,' said the knight. 'That is what I promised.'

She said, 'Before all these people I ask you to take me as your wife.' Her face was very ugly. It was uglier than ever!

The knight said unhappily, 'What you say is true. I did promise this. But please—please let me go free! Do not make me marry you!'

'No!' she said. 'No! I am old and ugly and very poor, but I want most of all to be your wife. I want to win your love.'

'My love!' he answered. 'You cannot really hope for that!'

The Queen and her ladies and the people

were laughing. They knew that the knight wanted to die now. He did not want to marry this ugly old woman.

Then the Queen spoke: 'You must do as you promised.'

'Yes,' said the knight, 'I must do as I promised.'

There was no dancing and singing; there were no fine clothes and fine food, no jewels and flowers at their marriage. It was done very quietly.

Then the knight went away and hid for the rest of the day. He did not want to look at his ugly old wife.

That night, his ugly wife turned to him and said, 'Come, dear husband. Is this how a Knight of King Arthur keeps his promise? What have I done wrong? Tell me, and I will try to do better and please you.'

'Do better?' said the knight. 'You cannot make your age less and you cannot make your face any better.'

'Is that all that is wrong?' she asked, laughing at him.

'Is it not enough?' he answered.

'Beauty is only on the outside,' she said.

‘The face becomes old but the heart is always young. What a person does is the great thing. The man who does the best and kindest things is far better than a great lord who does bad and unkind things.’

For a long time, she talked quietly to him. He was surprised. ‘You know a great deal, and you are very good,’ he said. ‘You have taught me a lot about men and women and goodness and badness.’

At the end she said, ‘Is it good to have a wife with a beautiful face who gives you great unhappiness? Or a wife who is old and ugly but is very kind to you and makes you very happy?’

The knight’s heart was softened by all that he had heard from her.

‘My lady, my love, and my dear wife,’ he said. ‘You are very wise and good. I will do what seems best to you.’

She laughed. ‘Remember the answer which you gave to the Queen? Will you let me rule over you?’

‘Yes, truly,’ he said. ‘I know it will be best.’

She kissed him and said, ‘Don’t be angry. I will be both to you—both beautiful and good. If I am not as beautiful as any queen

tomorrow, do as you wish with me!’

And the knight drew her to him and kissed her. And he found that he was kissing a very beautiful girl—the most beautiful girl in the world. For his wife was really a fairy. She had wanted to try out his goodness as a knight.

They lived happily together all their lives.

That is the end of my story. May God send us husbands who are young and loving, and may we be able to make them do whatever we wish. Men should do what their wives tell them to do. And they should not be too careful with their money.



5 THE PARDONER'S TALE

Three men looking for Death

'I speak in churches,' said the Pardoner. 'I always speak about the same thing. I say in Latin, *Radix malorum est cupiditas*. That means, 'The love of money is the cause of all evil.' It is the cause of all wrong-doing and of all the bad things which can happen to a man.

'To *pardon* means to forgive. I sell pardons—things which cause God to forgive men.

God will then pardon them for any evil which they have done.

‘After I have spoken to the people, I bring out my things. These are bones or bits of cloth or other things. I say that they have belonged to saints, but I do not really know this. People believe me and so I get money from them. I tell the people that the love of money is the cause of all evil, but I do all this in order to get money. I do not think that I live like a poor man. Oh no! I must have good clothes and good food. The poor people give me the money to buy these things. I sell them pardons, and so they are happy.’

The Pardoner’s story is a very good story. It is surprising for a bad man to tell such a good story.

This was the story.

There were some young men who did very many bad and foolish things. They drank too much, and they did no work. They tried to get money in evil ways.

While they were sitting drinking one morning, they heard a bell. It was ringing in front of the body of a dead man.

A boy had just brought them more to drink. They asked the boy, 'Whose body is that? Go and find out. Then come 'back and tell us.'

'I do not need to go and ask,' said the boy. 'I heard the name only two hours ago. He was a friend of yours. He was killed last night while he was drinking here. He was killed by that quiet thief called Death. Death kills all the people in this country. Death killed your friend and went on his way. He has killed thousands and thousands in these last years. You should get ready to meet Death. That is what my mother tells me.'

'The child speaks truly,' said the man who owned the drinking-house. 'Death has killed every man, woman and child in a large town near here.'

'I am not afraid to meet him!' cried one of the three young men. Then he jumped up. 'I'll find him! I'll look for him in every field and wood and town. Listen!' he cried to the other two. 'Let's hold up our hands and promise to be brothers; and we will find out and kill Death because Death has killed so many of our friends.'

'I will go with you,' said the second man.

He was still drinking.

‘And so will I,’ said the third man. He had already drunk a great deal.

They said, ‘We will kill this dangerous person, called Death, before night comes.’

So they went off at once to find him.

They walked half a mile, and they saw an old man. The old man spoke to them kindly. He said, ‘God be with you, my young friends.’

But the young men were not at all kind. They said, ‘Old fool! Why is your ugly body covered over with all these clothes?’

He said, ‘I am very old. I feel the cold. I cannot get warm.’

They answered, ‘Why have you lived so long, you ugly old man? Why don’t you die?’

The old man looked at them angrily. He said, ‘I live like this because I cannot find any young man who will change with me. No young man wants to become old. So I must become older and older. Death will not come and take me; so I go up and down over the Earth. I am an unhappy traveller looking for Death. I say to the ground under my feet: ‘Dear Mother Earth, let me come in! Oh,

Mother Earth, I want to lay myself down in you and rest for ever!’ But she will not be kind to me. That is why I am old—so very old.’ He had not finished. He drew his old body up and said quietly to them, ‘But you speak very unkindly to me, and that is a very bad thing. I have done nothing to hurt you. You should speak more carefully to an old man. I have no more to say. I must go on with my long journey to meet Death.’

One of the young men laughed. ‘No, you shall not do that!’ he shouted. ‘You have just spoken of Death. He has killed all our friends in this country. Now we are going to kill him. Tell us where he is.’

The old man said, ‘Do not speak like that. If you really want to find Death, I can tell you which way to go. Turn up this little lane. Not long ago I saw him sitting by a tree in that wood. He will not be afraid of anything that you can do. He is there, by that great tree. You are foolish to think that you can save men from Death. May God help you to become better men.’

The three young men turned and ran towards the tree which he had shown them.

There was no one there. But on the ground they saw a great number of golden pieces of money. They were very pleased to see all this money. They did not remember that they were trying to find Death.

But Death was very near, and he was thinking about them.

They sat down round all this gold; they put their hands into it and let the gold pieces run through their fingers. They sat there for some time and did not speak. At last one of them spoke. He was the young man with the blackest heart.

‘Listen to me,’ he said. ‘This money will give us happiness for the rest of our lives! We must not carry it away in daylight because people will think that we are thieves. One of us will go back to the town for food and drink. The two others will hide in this wood and watch the money until night comes.’

This plan seemed good to the others. They sent the youngest man to go to the town to buy food and drink.

As soon as he was out of sight, the first man said to the other, ‘We are like brothers—as we said. But one of us is away now. Take half

of this gold for yourself, and I shall take half for myself.'

The second man said, 'How can we do that? Our young brother knows all about the gold! There are three of us.'

'I'll tell you how we can do it. There are two of us. Two men are stronger than one. When the boy comes back, we will play a game with him, a game of fighting. You can start a playful fight with him. I will watch for a good opening and I will drive my knife into him. After that, my dear brother, there will be all this gold for only us two—half of it for you, and half for me.'

And so they planned death for their young friend.

But the young friend was bad too. As he walked to the town his mind was full of those beautiful pieces of gold. He said to himself, 'I must make a plan to get all the gold for myself. Then I shall be the happiest man in the world!'

At last he said, 'I know what I will do!' He went to a shop and said, 'The rats are eating the corn on my farm. I haven't even enough corn to make bread. Give me some-

thing to put in the rats' food to kill them.'

The man in the shop gave him a small bottle of *poison*. He said, 'This will kill your rats. Put it in their food or drinking-water. It is so strong that it will kill any living thing in the world.'

Then the young man went on to the next street and he bought three bottles of wine. He put the poison into two of the bottles. He kept the third bottle for himself. He said, 'I shall need this bottle of wine after I have killed my two friends. I shall need to drink after I have worked all night carrying away the gold and hiding it.'

He then bought some food and went back to the other two men. They said, 'Ha! He is bringing us our evening meal but he will never eat it! He does not know what we will do to him!'

They sat down to eat the food. Then the two men killed the youngest man.

Then they said, 'Let us eat and drink before we put his body in the ground.'

One man took up a bottle of wine. He drank a lot of it and gave the bottle to the other man.

They both died in great pain.

They had come out to kill Death, but Death came and found them all dead.

And Death laughed!

‘That is the end of my story,’ said the Pardoner. ‘Now I have some things here in my bag. They will bring forgiveness to you and they will save you from evil. Only a penny! Come and buy!’



6 THE FRANKLIN'S TALE

Three promises

The Franklin was a rich farmer. He had a big house and a lot of land. He liked good food and wine. People who came to his home always had nice things to eat and drink. He told a story about three promises.

Long ago, in France, a knight called Arveragus loved a lady called Dorigen. She

wanted to be sure that he was brave and good, so she asked him to do many hard things. 'This will show how much you love me,' she said.

He went away and had many adventures. He did all the hard things that she had asked. Then he came back to her.

She said, 'Now I know that you are not afraid of anything. I love you as much as you love me. I want to marry you.'

He loved her very much. He said, 'When we are married, I will never try to rule over you. I will never ask you to do anything that you do not want to do.'

'And when we are married,' she said, 'I will be your true and loving wife. I shall never do anything which will make us unhappy.'

They went to Arveragus's home in Brittany and lived lovingly together for more than a year. But the knight had always been a man of war. Even his happiness with Dorigen could not keep him from his love of fighting. He wanted to go to England and fight there.

So he sailed away, and he was away for two whole years.

Poor Dorigen was left at home. She could

not be happy. She loved her husband very much. She could not sleep; she could not eat.

Her friends tried hard to help her.

They said, 'You will die if you do not try to sleep more and eat more.'

She got better very slowly. She was young and full of hope. 'My husband will come back again,' she said. Arveragus sent her letters. 'All is well,' he said in his letters. 'I shall be home again soon.'

Her friends said to her, 'Now you are feeling better, so you must come out of your house. Do not sit alone any more. Come and be with us.' So she began to go for walks with them.

As she walked by the sea with her friends, she saw the great black rocks in the sea. They made her feel very afraid. Sometimes, away from the sea, she lay on the grass and thought about them.

She thought: 'I do not like rocks. They can kill men when they sail near the land in their ships. Why did God make them? Why did God make something which can kill men? He loves all men!'

Her friends saw that she was becoming ill again. They were kind people. They kept

her away from the black rocks. They took her out to dance, and to play games with them.

One day in spring, they went to a beautiful garden. They sat down and had a meal on the grass. Then they danced and sang. Only Dorigen was unhappy. She saw so many men dancing happily, but none of them was Arveragus.

One of the dancers in the garden was a young man called Aurelius. He was a fine young man. He had loved Dorigen with all his heart for two years. But he had never said a word to her about it. Some of his friends knew that he was in love; they did not know who the lady was.

Now Aurelius could no longer keep his love hidden in his heart.

‘Madam,’ he said to her, ‘I know that your heart is over the sea with your Arveragus. You are the wife of another man. I know that you cannot love me, but I love you deeply.’

Dorigen did not like to hear this.

‘You must never say such things to me again, Aurelius,’ she said. ‘I could never leave Arveragus.’

Then she said, laughing, 'Aurelius, I will love you if you can take away all the rocks from the sea. Then Arveragus can come safely home in his ship.'

'Is there no other way than this?' he asked.

She answered, 'No, there is no other way.'

Aurelius went away. First he prayed to the Sun god: 'O Lord of the Sun, I pray you to speak to your sister, the Moon. Ask her to make the sea rise up higher and higher and cover the rocks. Then my lady will love me! She must do what she has promised.'

But nothing happened. The sea did not rise and cover the rocks. He became very ill. His brother came to take care of him. Aurelius told him everything. 'I must make those rocks go,' he said. 'If they go away, I shall be a very happy man.'

His brother was a man who had read many books. He wanted to help Aurelius.

Two years passed. Then Arveragus came home from the wars. He had done very well and he had fought bravely. Dorigen was very happy. All their friends were very happy. Only Aurelius knew nothing about it. He lay at home, very ill. His brother stayed close

to him. He read his books and thought all the time about his brother Aurelius's wish. 'How can I help Aurelius?' he asked himself.

At last he remembered something. 'One day in Orleans, I saw a book in a friend's house. It was a book about magic. If I can get that book it will tell me how to make those rocks go. Even if they are hidden only for a little time, that will be enough to give my brother his wish.'

He told Aurelius about this book. Aurelius heard him and felt better. He jumped out of bed. In a day or two he was much better. So he went to Orleans with his brother.

As they came near Orleans, they met a young man. He was a magician. He said to them, 'I know why you have come here.' To their great surprise, he told them everything that was in their minds.

They went with him to his house that night. Before they ate, he showed them many strange things. They were all done by magic. Forests came before their eyes, full of animals. Then they saw a river, running through the room in which they were all sitting. They saw many knights fighting. The young man even showed Aurelius his love, Dorigen. Aurelius

seemed to be dancing with her.

But all the time, they had not left the house.

Before they went to bed, Aurelius had made up his mind.

He said to the young man, 'If you can take those rocks away or hide them, I will pay you a thousand pounds.'

Next morning they all rode to Brittany. It was December, and it was very cold. At once the magician set to work. He began to make magic.

The sea rose up and covered the rocks. Not one rock could be seen.

Aurelius went to Dorigen. 'I shall tell her this great thing. She will do what she has promised. She will keep her promise. She will love me because the rocks have gone. That is what she promised.'

Aurelius told Dorigen once more how much he loved her. He ended, 'Do as you please; but think of what you said in the garden that day. I have done what you told me to do. All the rocks have gone.'

He went away and left her.

Dorigen went down to the sea. She said, 'It is true! All the rocks have gone—or the

sea has come up and hidden them. Aurelius has done what I said. But what can I do now? Must I keep my promise?—or not?’

Arveragus had gone away for a few days. So she could not tell him about it. She could not ask him.

She lay on her bed. She said, ‘What can I do?—Shall I kill myself? Other women have killed themselves because their husbands did not love them; but Arveragus loves me. Women have killed themselves because they loved a man who was not their husband. I do not love Aurelius. But I have made a promise. I must keep my promise. But I cannot keep this promise. What shall I do? What can I do?’

She lay on her bed and wept.

After two days Arveragus came home. He asked, ‘Why are you weeping?’

Dorigen told him the whole story.

He looked lovingly at her. ‘Is that all?’ he said. ‘Is there nothing more?’

‘Is that not enough? What must I do?’

He said, ‘A promise is a promise. You must keep your promise. I love you very much, but I cannot love you so well if you break a promise. Truth is the greatest thing in the

world. We must be true to ourselves and true to others. You must keep your promise.'

Dorigen said, 'I must go to the garden where Aurelius first told me of his love. He will go there, too.'

Aurelius was going to the garden where he had first told Dorigen of his love for her. On his way to the garden, he met Dorigen in the street. Aurelius was full of happiness. But Dorigen's eyes were red with weeping.

Aurelius said, 'Where are you going?'

She said, 'My husband has told me that I must keep my promise. I am going to the garden where first I met you. I am going to keep my promise.'

Aurelius looked at Dorigen. He saw how sad she was. He thought, 'I am doing a very bad thing. I am asking her to be untrue to her husband Arveragus. She loves him very much.'

'Madam,' he said, 'tell your husband Arveragus that I can see how good he is. I will not come between his love and you. You are the best and truest wife I have ever met.'

Dorigen fell on her knees to thank him.

Then, with a heart full of happiness, she went home to her husband. For the rest of their long life together he cared for her like a queen; and she was always his true and most loving wife.

Poor Aurelius began to think, 'How can I ever pay the magician all that money? I shall have to sell all that I have. And, even then, I shall not have enough. Perhaps he will let me pay something every year.'

He found that he had five hundred pounds. He took it to the magician and said, 'Here is all my money. I will get all the rest of the money for you. But please let me have two or three years to get the money and pay you.'

The magician said, 'I did what I promised to do. You promised to pay me a thousand pounds.'

'Yes,' said Aurelius. 'You did what you promised and I promised to pay you.'

'Have you not had the love of your lady?'

'No,' said Aurelius. 'No, I have not. Her husband loved her very much but he would not let her break her promise. So he sent her to me. When she said, 'Take away the rocks and I promise to be your lover,' she did not know the kind of magic which you can do.

How could I make the poor lady keep her promise? I sent her back to her husband.'

The magician said, 'My dear brother, you have done the right thing. And now I will do the right thing. I will not take any of your money. Good-bye. I wish you well.'

He got on his horse and rode away.

The Franklin's tale was ended. 'My friends,' he said, 'now you must tell me the truth. Which of those three men seemed the best man to you?—Aurelius?—or Arveragus?—or the magician?'



7 THE FRIAR'S TALE

The Summoner and the Devil

Among the company of pilgrims there were two men who hated each other. One was a Summoner and the other was a Friar. A Summoner calls people to go before a high officer of the Church when they have done some wrong. The Friar asked people for money for the Church. The Summoner often got money because he promised not to tell

about people's wrong-doing.

The friar hated the summoner and he said to the pilgrims, 'I am going to tell a story about summoners.' The summoner said, 'I will tell a story about friars.' But the friar said, 'I will tell my story first.'

So the friar began.

There was once an Archdeacon—a great man in the Church. He was a bad man. If people gave him money, he let them do whatever they wanted.

A summoner worked for him. This man watched people quietly. He caught them when they did bad things. Then he said to them, 'You must leave the Church. We will not let you come into the church to pray if you do not give me money.'

One day he went to see an old woman. She believed that she had done something bad. And he wanted to make her pay him money. On the way he met a young man.

'Where are you riding to?' asked the young man.

No one liked summoners, so the summoner made up an answer. 'I am just going to get some money which an old woman near here

must pay to my lord.'

'Oh, then you are a bailiff,' said the young man. A bailiff is a man who looks after land for the owner of the land. He goes to the farmers who work on the land and gets money from them. They pay him because they use the owner's land.

'Yes,' answered the summoner, 'that is what I am and that is what I do. I am a bailiff.'

The young man said, 'I have a farm. I look after it for its owner. Let us be friends.'

The summoner answered, 'Yes. I do work like that. Tell me: how do you get money from people?'

The young man said, 'I like a lot of money, but my master does not pay me enough; so I have to get it in other ways. I take whatever anyone gives me!'

The summoner said, 'That is true of me, too. I must make people give me money. I have my own ways of doing it. I do not mind if it makes them sad or afraid. I think we are like each other! So it is time we learnt each other's names.'

The young man's answer gave him a surprise. He said, 'I will tell you who I am. I am

a *devil*. I live in *hell*.'

'I thought you were a man like me,' said the summoner. 'You look like a man.'

'We can look like anything we want to,' answered the devil. 'There are good reasons why we have this power. Now—let us go on our travels.'

They started off. They saw a man with a cart which was so heavy that his horses could not pull it along. He was hitting the horses and shouting at them.

'The devil take you!' he cried. 'The devil take you and the cart, too!'

The summoner said to the devil, 'Did you hear that? Why don't you go and take his horses and cart? He says that you may take them.'

The devil answered, 'You cannot believe all that you hear. Wait a little and see what happens.'

The horses pulled harder and harder; the cart began to move. 'Good horses!' he shouted. 'Well done, Brock! Well done, Scottie! God save you all!'

'What did I tell you?' said the devil. 'The man said one thing but he meant something

else. There is nothing for me here. We must go on.'

When they had left the town behind, the summoner said to the devil, 'You did not do very well with the man and his horses. Now I am going to get some money from this poor old woman. Watch carefully and learn how I do it.'

He went to the old woman's door. 'Come on out!' he cried. 'I am sure you are doing something bad!'

'Who is that?' said the old woman. 'Oh, God save you, sir.'

The summoner said, 'Go to the Archdeacon. People are saying some bad things about you. You must say if they are true. If they are true, you must pay money to the Archdeacon.'

The old woman began to cry. 'Be kind to me, good sir,' she said. 'I am ill; I cannot get so far. Can I not pay you?'

'Yes, but you must pay me at once,' said the summoner. 'It will cost you twelve pennies. Be quick!'

'Twelve pennies!' cried the old woman. 'Oh, help me, God! I do not have so much

money.'

'If I let you go free, may the devil come and take me away!' said the summoner.

'Come on, pay up!'

'But I have done nothing bad,' said the poor woman.

'Pay up, or I will take your cooking-pot. You were untrue to your husband. You know that you were!'

'I was never untrue to my husband. I loved him too much. As for you and my cooking-pot—may the blackest devil in hell carry you off and the cooking-pot, too!'

Now the devil spoke to her. 'Do you really mean what you are saying?'

'The devil can do as I say,' she answered. 'He can carry him off—clothes, cooking-pot, and all!'

The summoner was still shouting at her. He was very angry. 'Will I get no money at all from this old woman?'

'Why are you so angry?' asked the devil. 'You and the pot are mine. She gave them to me. Tonight you shall be in hell with me. There you can learn all that you want to know about us devils and how we do our work.'

The devil sprang at the summoner and caught him. Then he carried him down to hell, where there is a place kept for summoners. It is always very full!

The friar had finished. He looked at all the pilgrims and said, 'Think about my story, and may God keep us all from the devil who tries to catch us and take us down to hell!'

The summoner then told his story against the friar. But it was not a nice story. So I have not put it here in this book.



8 THE DOCTOR'S TALE

Appius and Virginia

There was a doctor among the men and women who were riding to Canterbury. He was a very good doctor; he could make sick people well again. And he was always ready to help everyone who was unhappy in body or mind. He knew a lot about the stars, and he used the stars to help him in his work.

He wore beautiful clothes of red and blue

and grey, with soft rich cloth next to his body. He had a great deal of money. Sometimes he put gold into a drink. Then he gave people the drink to make them better.

He told a very sad story. The famous Roman writer Livy wrote it in Latin long ago.

Long ago in Rome, there was a knight called Virginius. Everything good had come to him: he had a great deal of money, and many friends. He loved his wife. He had a daughter, called Virginia. She was fourteen years old. Her face was as beautiful as a rose and her hair was golden in the sun. No one had ever seen a more beautiful girl. She was beautiful in every way; all that she did was good and beautiful.

When she spoke, she always spoke the truth. She never said one thing and meant another. Yet all that she said was kind. Everyone loved her.

Everyone said, 'Virginia will be a good wife some day. She will make some man very happy.'

Everyone was sure that this was true.

But poor Virginia did not live long enough

to become anyone's wife.

One day, Virginia went into the town with her mother. Now at this time a man named Appius ruled over all this city and the land round about. As this beautiful girl walked past him he looked at her. He said, 'I will have that girl for myself. I shall get her in some way. She shall be mine! I know that she will not wish to come to me. Money cannot buy her. Her father and mother love her too much. What can I do to get her?' Then he said, 'I know what I will do! I know a man who lives a very bad life. His name is Claudius. He will do anything I ask. I will tell him to come and see me.'

Claudius came to Appius. Appius told him his plan, but he thought, 'I must make sure that this man does not tell anyone about my plan.' He said, 'If you tell one man or woman, that will be the end of you. I shall cut off your head!'

'Do not be afraid,' said Claudius. 'I shall not tell other people about your plan.'

Appius was very pleased. He gave the bad man some nice presents, and then Claudius went home.

The Doctor stopped. He looked round at the men and women. They were all listening to his story as they rode along. He said, 'This thing that I am telling you really happened. Now I will tell you about the rest of it.'

Appius was the ruler of that country. He was sitting in his *court judging* the people. Then Claudius came in. He cried out, 'I pray you, Appius, to make Virginius give me back my servant. I pray you to send for Virginius. Then you and he may hear what I say.'

So Appius sent for Virginius.

Virginius came.

Then Claudius said what Appius had told him to say. He said, 'Virginius has a servant girl in his house. This girl was stolen by night from my house when she was very young. Virginius says that she is his daughter. That is not true! Make Virginius give her back to me.'

Virginius said, 'That is not true. All my family and all my friends will say that it is not true.'

Appius laughed. 'Where are they? They are not here. I can only judge by what this man has told me. This man, Claudius, must

have his servant. You must give the servant back to him.'

Appius told his men to go and get the girl. He said, 'Bring her to me here.'

Virginius went home. He said, 'I must save my daughter! I see what Appius wants to do. He wants to have Virginia for himself.'

He went home and said to a servant, 'Tell Virginia to come to me.'

She came and stood before her father. He looked for a long time at her beautiful kind face.

'Daughter,' he said to her. 'I have something very bad to tell you—Oh, why was I ever born? All your life I have loved you; I have thought of you by day and by night. I do not think that I can ever know any happiness again.'

Then he told Virginia about the judge's court, and he said, 'I must save you from Appius. There is only one way of saving you. I must kill you.'

'Oh my dearest father!' said the poor girl. She came to him and put her arms around him. 'Am I to die? Is there no hope at all?'

'There is no hope, my dearest. Hope is

dead.'

'I must thank God,' she said, 'that I shall die. I shall not then go to Appius. Try not to hurt me too much, father.'

Virginus cut off her head with his sword. He took her head to Appius and gave it to him in front of all the people.

Appius was very angry. Now he would never have Virginia. He told his men to take Virginus out and kill him.

But Virginus was saved. The people of the town heard what had happened. They heard about Appius' plan to get Virginia.

They heard that Virginus had killed Virginia to save her from Appius.

They came running to the Court. They took Appius and threw him into prison and there he killed himself. They were going to kill Claudius, but Virginus said, 'No. Do not kill him. Send him out of the country; he must never return.'

'That is the end of my story,' said the Doctor. 'It is a sad story; but you can learn from it. In the end we must pay for wrongdoing. God will judge us, sooner or later.'

The Host cried out, 'Oh, the poor girl!

Her beauty caused her death. Some things which we think good often bring us most unhappiness. O doctor, your story touched my heart! What shall we do to make us happy again?—We'll have a drink and have a meal—And let the next story be a happy one which will make us laugh.'



9 THE NUN'S PRIEST'S TALE

Chaunticleer and the Fox

A *nun* is a woman who gives her life to God. She lives with other nuns in a nunnery.

The nun who was going on the pilgrimage was named Madame Eglantine. A priest went with her to help her in her prayers. He was the nun's priest. His name was John.

The knight said, 'We have had enough sad stories. Let us have a happy story.'

The Host turned to the nun's priest. He said, 'Come here, priest. Come here, Sir John. Tell us a story which will make us feel happy.'

The nun's priest said, 'I will do my best.' So he told the story of Chauncicleer and Pertelote.

Chauncicleer was a *cock*, and Pertelote was a hen.

This is the story.

There was a poor old woman who lived in a small house near a field. There was a wood near the house.

The old woman was so poor that she could not buy food. She ate only the things that she grew in her garden, and the eggs which she got from her hens, and she drank the milk from her cow.

The hens lived in her garden during the day. Chauncicleer, the cock, was the lord and master of the hens. Chauncicleer means 'Sing beautifully'. Chauncicleer had a beautiful voice. Every morning he sang when the sun came up; and he sang every hour during the day. So the old woman could always tell the time by Chauncicleer.

Chauncicleer was lord over seven hens.

But his wife, whom he loved most, was named Pertelote. She was very wise and she knew her husband very well. He told her everything. And they sang love songs together.

At night Chauncleer and the hens slept on the top of the old woman's house.

One morning, just before the sun rose, Chauncleer was sitting on the top of the old woman's house with Pertelote and the other hens. Chauncleer was making a loud sad noise, like someone who is very afraid. When Pertelote heard him, she was afraid, too. She said, 'O dear heart! What is the matter with you? What a bad sleeper you are!'

'Don't be angry with me, my love,' answered her husband. 'I have had a very bad *dream*. I thought that I was in great danger. I am still afraid. May God make my dream bring me something good and not evil or danger.'

'What was your dream?' asked Pertelote.

'I dreamt that I was walking in our garden. I saw a beast like a dog. It wanted to kill me! Its colour was between yellow and red. The ends of its ears were black. It had two burning eyes. I have never felt so afraid. That was the

reason why I made those noises in my sleep.'

'Oh!' said Pertelote, 'I thought that I had a brave husband! Now I find that you are not brave. You are not the sort of husband that a woman wants. How can a brave man be afraid of dreams? Your dreams have come because you have eaten too much.'

Pertelote knew a lot about the body. She was as good as any doctor.

She said, 'You are ill. Your face is too red. There is too much redness in your blood. That makes people dream about fire and danger. When we fly down to the ground this morning, I will show you some plants. You must eat those plants and they will make you well.'

She went on talking about different plants for different illnesses.

Chaunticleer was not pleased with all this talk. He did not like his wife telling him what to do. 'Dreams mean something,' he thought. 'They are not caused by eating too much.'

He said, 'I thank you for your lesson; but perhaps you do not know that there are many wise and learned books about dreams. These

books show that dreams have a meaning. Bad dreams may tell us of danger. I can tell you many stories about dreams which were true.'

Chaunticleer was a great talker, and he really had read a great many books. He told his wife about three dreams which came true.

Two men wanted to go on a pilgrimage. They came to a town where there were very many people. There were very few houses in which they could sleep. So the two friends had to sleep in different houses. One friend slept in a good house. The other man slept in a farm house.

The man in the good house dreamt that his friend was calling him. His friend was crying, 'O help me! Help me! I am in a room above a lot of cows. I am going to be killed. Come quickly!'

The friend had the same dream three times.

The third time, the man said, 'It is too late. They have hidden my body in a farm cart. Go to the west gate of the town. You will find the farm-cart there. My body is hidden under some earth in the cart.'

So the friend went to the west gate, and there he found the body hidden on the cart.

Chaunticleer said, 'You can learn from this story that dreams have a meaning. I will tell you another story—Two men wanted to cross the sea. They had to wait until the wind was just right.

'These two men slept in the city, ready to sail early on the next day. They went to bed in the same room, happy and pleased that they could sail on the next day.

'But listen, Pertelote. Something happened to one of them. In the night he dreamt that he saw a man in their room. This man said to him, "If you sail tomorrow, you will die. Stay here in this city, for one more day. Then you will be safe."'

'The man woke and told his friend the story. His friend laughed at him; he would not believe him. "All right!" he said, "I see that you will stay here. You will lose the right wind. Dreams mean nothing at all. Good day to you!"'

'He walked away. He never saw his friend again. The ship sailed on to some rocks, and all the men in it were killed.'

Chaunticleer told another story. It was about the son of the King of Mercia. The little

boy was only seven years old. He dreamt that he was in danger. He told this to a kind woman who looked after him. No one believed the story. But his sister later killed the boy.

As Chauncleer ended his three stories, he said, 'I feel better now. My dear Pertelote, you are so beautiful that you make me feel well again. All my fears have gone. I feel much happier now.'

They both flew down into the garden. Chauncleer called all his hens to him and they began to eat. He was like a king among his hens. He was not afraid any more.

It was time for him to sing. So he lifted up his voice and sang. He made the noise of a happy cock. He was pleased to be as good as a clock for everyone near and far.

It was a beautiful morning.

'Madam Pertelote,' he said, 'hear how beautifully all these happy birds are singing. See how the flowers are coming up after their long winter sleep. Really, my heart is full of happiness!'

But just then a terrible thing happened. Our happiness in this world never lasts very long.

A fox had lived for three years in the little wood near the old woman's house. He came into her garden during the night. He was in the garden where Chaunticleer and his hens walked together. He lay there very quietly, hiding among the plants until it was midday. 'That is the best time to catch poor Chaunticleer,' he said to himself.

O Chaunticleer, what a bad day it was for you! You came down from the safe house into the garden! What a bad morning it was for you! You thought that you could put your dream out of your mind!

It was a mistake for Chaunticleer to believe his wife. Women often make mistakes! I am a nun's priest, so I must not say too much against women.

Pertelote was happy sitting in a hole in the ground. All her sisters were round her. The sun was bright. Chaunticleer was near them singing loudly.

Then Chaunticleer turned and looked. He saw the fox. He stopped singing. He was afraid. He had never seen a fox before, but he felt that this was an enemy. He was just going to fly away when the fox said, 'Dear sir, why do you want to fly away from me? I

am your friend. I do not want to hurt you. I only want to hear you sing. You sing very beautifully. Your father (God rest him!) and your mother have both been in my house. It was very kind of them to come. I was very happy to have them there.

‘I have never heard anyone sing so well as your father did on that morning! To make his voice even stronger he shut his eyes and stood up as high as he could. Now, please, sir, can you sing for me as your father did?’

Chaunticleer did not see the fox’s true meaning. He was very pleased by the fox’s words. He stood up as high as he could. He held up his head and shut his eyes and began to sing.

The fox caught him and threw him on his back. Then he ran with him towards the wood.

The hens saw the fox carrying off their beautiful cock. They made a terrible noise. Pertelote cried out louder than any of them.

The woman and her two daughters ran out of the house. They cried out ‘Fox! Fox!’ and ran after them. The seven hens ran. People ran out of their houses and threw things at the fox. Three dogs ran with them.

The cow ran. Ducks flew up from the ground. Even the bees went after the fox.

All followed the fox and poor Chaunticleer. The women shouted 'Fox! Fox!' The hens ran—'Cluck! Cluck!' The dogs ran—'Wuff! Wuff!' The cow ran—'Moo! Moo!' The ducks flew—'Quack! Quack!' And the bees came out—'Buzz, Buzz.'

'Now good people,' said the nun's priest, 'you must listen to the end of my story. Then you will learn something.'

Chaunticleer spoke to the fox. He said, 'Sir Fox, you must turn round and say to those foolish people, "Go back home! I have safely reached the wood. I shall eat this cock, and you can't do anything about it. So stop making that noise and go home!"'

The fox answered, 'That's just what I will do.' Of course he opened his mouth when he spoke. So Chaunticleer got out of his mouth and flew up a high tree.

The fox looked up and said, 'O dear Sir Chaunticleer. I did not mean to make you afraid of me. I did not really want to eat you. Come down and I will tell you the truth.'

'No!' said Chaunticleer. 'I will certainly

not come down. I have been very foolish.'

'Ah!' said the fox. 'I was the foolish one. I talked. I must learn to keep my mouth shut.'

'So,' said the nun's priest, 'be careful not to believe all the nice things that are said to you in this world. My story is not just a simple one about a fox and a cock and seven hens. It can teach you some things. You can learn from it.'

'And,' said the nun's priest, 'I pray God to make us all good men and women.'

Then the Host said, 'Thank you, Sir Priest. Thank you for a very good story.'

Chaucer ended his book, 'The Canterbury Tales'. He wrote 'I pray that all those people who have read this book have liked it. And, if there were parts which you did not like, I ask you to think, "He tried to do his best. He would have done better if he could."'

List of extra words

CHAPTER		CHAPTER	
1	Cathedral	5	Pardon
2	Clerk	3	Patient
9	Cock	1	Pilgrim
8	Court	1	Pilgrimage
7	Devil	5	Poison
9	Dream	2	Priest
5	Evil	2	Prison
2	Goddess	2	Prisoner
7	Hell	2	Promise
1	Inn	1	Saint
8	Judge	1	Tale
2	Knee	2	Temple
1	Knight	2	Tower
9	Nun		

Questions

I THE PROLOGUE—AT THE TABARD INN

- 1 What is the word for a pilgrim's journey?
- 2 What was Thomas à Becket?
- 3 Where was he killed?
- 4 What did each of the pilgrims do on the way from London?
- 1 Where did the pilgrims meet?
- 2 What was the innkeeper called? The . . .
- 3 What will we give to the man who tells the best story?
- 4 Who will say which is the best story?
- 1 When did they get up next morning?
- 2 Why did they stop?
- 3 Who will tell the first story?
- 4 What did knights do?
- 5 Why was this knight going to Canterbury?

2 THE KNIGHT'S TALE—PALAMON AND ARCITE

- 1 Where did Theseus rule?
- 2 Whom did Hippolyta bring with her?
- 3 Which town has Creon conquered?
- 4 What happened to Palamon and Arcite?
- 1 Whom did Palamon see in the garden?
- 2 Who else saw Emily?
- 3 What happened to the friendship between the two prisoners?

- 1 What did Perotheus ask Theseus to do?
- 2 What will the Duke do to Arcite if he comes back to Athens?
- 3 What did the god Mercury tell Arcite to do?
- 1 What did Arcite become?
- 2 What did Palamon's friend do?
- 3 Where did Palamon hide?
- 4 What will Palamon and Arcite do?
- 1 Who stopped the fight?
- 2 Who asked the Duke not to kill them?
- 3 When will they come back to Athens?
- 4 What must they bring with them?
- 1 Venus was the goddess of. . . Of what?
- 2 Mars was the god of. . . Of what?
- 3 What does Diana want people to be?
- 1 Which temple did Palamon visit?
- 2 Which temple did Arcite visit?
- 3 Which temple did Emily visit?
- 4 What had the gods Mars and Venus said?
- 1 When will the fight be ended? When the leader. . .
- 2 Who was taken prisoner?
- 3 To whom did Venus go?
- 1 What happened to Arcite?
- 2 For whom did Arcite send?
- 3 What was the last thing Arcite said?
- 1 What happened to the people of Athens and Thebes?
- 2 What was the Clerk of Oxford learning to be?
- 3 Why were his clothes old?

3 THE CLERK OF OXFORD'S TALE—PATIENT GRISELDA

- 1 What was the name of the Marquis?
- 2 What did the people ask him to do?
- 3 What did the Marquis ask his people to do?
To treat his wife as if. . .
- 1 What was the name of the poor man?
- 2 What did his daughter do for him?
- 3 Did the people know about Griselda?
- 1 Why had Griselda finished her work early?
- 2 What will the Marquis ask Griselda to promise?
- 3 Griselda said, 'I will marry you if. . .' If what?
- 1 What was Griselda's first child—a girl or a boy?
- 2 What did Walter do to this child?
- 3 What did Griselda ask the man to do with the child?
- 4 Where did the man take the child?
- 1 What do the people say about the boy?
- 2 Where did Walter send the boy?
- 3 What did the people say? 'He did not want the Lady Griselda to love. . . She must. . .'
- 1 What did the papers from Rome tell Walter to do?
- 2 What did Walter tell his sister to do?
- 3 What is the old saying?
- 1 Griselda even took off. . . Took off what?
- 2 Griselda went to live with her father. What was it like?
- 3 What did the Marquis ask Griselda to do? 'To make everything. . .'

- 1 What did Griselda ask the Marquis to do to the new 'wife'?
- 2 Who is the new 'wife' really?
- 3 What did the ladies do to Griselda?
- 1 What did the Marquis do for Janicula?
- 2 What should all women be?
- 3 What does Chaucer say to all wives?

4 THE WIFE OF BATH'S TALE—WHAT DO WOMEN WANT MOST?

- 1 What sort of woman was the Wife of Bath?
(Face, hat, horse)
- 2 What had the young knight done?
- 3 What question must the young knight answer?
- 4 What did a man say?
- 1 What did he see in the wood?
- 2 Who was in the place where the other women had been?
- 3 What must the knight promise?
- 1 What does every woman wish for?
- 2 What did the old woman ask the knight to do?
- 3 What did the Queen say?
- 1 The old woman said, 'Is it good to have a wife... or a wife who...but...?'
- 2 What did the old woman become when the knight kissed her?
- 3 The Wife of Bath said, 'Men should...And they should not be...'

5 THE PARDONER'S TALE — THREE MEN LOOKING FOR DEATH

- 1 What does 'Radix malorum est cupiditas' mean?
- 2 What does 'to pardon' mean?
- 3 What things does the Pardoner sell?
- 1 Where was the bell being rung?
- 2 By whom was the man killed?
- 3 What will the three men do?
- 1 Why is the old man an unhappy traveller?
What is he looking for?
- 2 What did the young men ask the old man to tell them?
- 3 Where is Death?
- 1 What did they see on the ground?
- 2 Why did they send the youngest man to the town?
- 3 What will the first man do to the youngest man?
- 1 What did the youngest man put in the wine?
- 2 What did the two men do after they had killed the youngest man?
- 3 What did the Pardoner try to do after he had told his story?

6 THE FRANKLIN'S TALE—THREE PROMISES

- 1 What was the Franklin?
- 2 Where did Arveragus and Dorigen live?
- 3 For how long was Arveragus away in England?
- 1 What did Arveragus send to Dorigen?
- 2 What did Dorigen see as she walked by the sea?
- 3 Where did Aurelius meet Dorigen?

- 1 Dorigen said to Aurelius, 'I will love you if you can. . . .' Can do what?
- 2 To whom did Aurelius pray?
- 3 What happened to Aurelius?
- 4 Who came to take care of Aurelius?
- 1 What happened after two years?
- 2 What had the brother of Aurelius seen in Orleans?
- 3 What was the young man?
- 4 How much money did Aurelius promise to pay the magician?
- 1 What did Arveragus say to Dorigen? 'Truth is. . . .'
- 2 Must Dorigen keep her promise?
- 3 When will Dorigen go?
- 1 Aurelius said to Dorigen, 'I will not. . . .'
- 2 How much money had Aurelius?
- 3 Did the magician take the money?
- 4 What question did the Franklin ask the pilgrims?

7 THE FRIAR'S TALE—THE SUMMONER AND THE DEVIL

- 1 How did the Summoner get money?
- 2 Whom did the Summoner go to see?
- 3 What is a bailiff?
- 4 Who was the young man?
- 5 Where does he live?
- 1 What did the man say to his horse and cart?
- 2 The Summoner asked the Devil, 'Why don't you. . . .?'
- 3 What did the Devil answer?

- 4 What did the man say when the cart moved?
- 5 How much money did the Summoner tell the woman to pay him?
- 1 What did the Summoner say?—‘If I let you go free, may . . .’
- 2 What will the Summoner take away from the old woman?
- 3 What did the old woman say?
- 4 What did the Devil ask the old woman?
- 5 Where will the Summoner be tonight?

8 THE DOCTOR’S TALE—APPIUS AND VIRGINIA

- 1 Who wrote the doctor’s tale in Latin?
- 2 How old was Virginia?
- 3 What did everyone say about Virginia?
- 4 Why was this not true?
- 1 Who was Appius?
- 2 What was the name of the bad man?
- 3 What will Appius do to him if he tells others about the plan?
- 1 Where was Appius sitting?
- 2 What did Appius say? ‘Claudius must . . .’
- 3 What did Appius tell his men to do?
- 1 What did Virginius take to Appius?
- 2 What did the people do to Appius?
- 3 What did Appius do in prison?
- 4 What did the people do to Claudius?
- 5 What can you learn from this story?

9 THE NUN'S PRIEST'S TALE—CHAUNTICLEER AND THE FOX

- 1 What is a nun?
- 2 What was the name of the Nun's Priest?
- 3 What was Chaunticleer?
- 1 What does Chaunticleer mean?
- 2 What was the name of Chaunticleer's wife?
- 3 What has Chaunticleer had?
- 4 What did he see in his dream?
- 5 What will Pertelote show to Chaunticleer in the garden?
- 1 How many stories did Chaunticleer tell?
- 2 Where was the body hidden?
- 3 Why did the two men have to wait?
- 1 What happened to the friend in the second story?
- 2 Who killed the little boy?
- 3 How did Chaunticleer show his happiness?
- 1 Where had the fox lived?
- 2 When will the fox catch Chaunticleer?
- 3 How did Chaunticleer's father stand when he sang?
- 4 What did the fox do to Chaunticleer?
- 1 What did Chaunticleer tell the fox to do?
- 2 What did Chaunticleer do when the fox did this?
- 3 What foolish thing did the fox do?
- 4 What must people be careful not to do?
- 5 What does Chaucer ask people to say about the parts of his book which do not please them?

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